

Atty. Dkt. No. 016906-0269

REMARKS

Claims 1-20 were pending in the application. Claims 5, 14, and 18 have been placed in independent form. Claims 14 and 18 have also been amended to place the claims in more typical U.S. format. Claims 1, 7, 13, and 17 have been canceled, and no new claims have been added. Therefore, claims 2-6, 8-12, 14-16, and 18-20 are now pending in the present application. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the present application in view of the foregoing amendments and in view of the reasons that follow.

Indication of Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants sincerely thank Examiner Jimenez for indicating that claims 5-8, 14, and 18 contain allowable subject matter, and that claims 8-12 are allowed. Claims 5, 14, and 18 have been rewritten in independent form, in order to place them into prima facie condition for allowance.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 1-4, 13, 15-17, and 19-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,737,952 to Baumann et al. (hereinafter "Baumann") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,098,441 to Hada et al. (hereinafter "Hada") and U.S. Patent No. 5,743,329 to Damsohn et al. (hereinafter "Damsohn"). Claims 1, 13, and 17 have been canceled. The remaining claims subject to this rejection have been amended to depend from a claim that has been placed into prima facie condition for allowance, pursuant to the indication in the Office Action. Therefore, the rejection has been rendered moot.

Claim 7 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Damsohn in view of Baumann. Claim 7 has been canceled, thereby mooting this rejection as well.

Conclusion

Applicants believe that the present application is in condition for allowance, and favorable reconsideration is requested.

Examiner Jimenez is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

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Respectfully submitted,

Date 11/12/03

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Should additional fees be necessary in connection with the filing of this paper, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge Deposit Account No. 19-0741 for any such fees.